

hydrogen bond or a coordinate covalent bond with the superabsorbent particles, and at least one functional group capable of forming a hydrogen bond with the cellulose fiber;

combining superabsorbent particles having a hydrogen or a coordinate covalent bonding functional site with the binder-containing cellulose fiber; and

binding the superabsorbent particles to the binder-containing cellulose fiber.

56. (Amended) The method of Claim 55, wherein the nonpolymeric organic binder is present on the cellulose fiber in an amount ranging from 1 to 40% by weight based on the weight of the cellulose fiber.

57. (Amended) The method of Claim 55, wherein the nonpolymeric organic binder is present on the cellulose fiber in an amount ranging from 1 to 25% by weight based on the weight of the cellulose fiber.

58. (Amended) The method of Claim 55, wherein the cellulose fiber comprises wood pulp fiber.

59. The method of Claim 55, wherein the functional groups of the nonpolymeric binder are hydroxyl functional groups.

60. (Amended) The method of Claim 59, wherein the binder is present on the cellulose fiber in an amount ranging from 1-40% by weight based on the weight of the cellulose fiber.

61. (Amended) The method of Claim 59, wherein the binder is present on the cellulose fiber in an amount ranging from 1-25% by weight based on the weight of the cellulose fiber.

62. The method of Claim 55, wherein the binder is a diol.

63. (Amended) The method of Claim 62, wherein the binder is present on the cellulose fiber in an amount ranging from 1-40% by weight based on the weight of the cellulose fiber.

64. (Amended) The method of Claim 62, wherein the binder is present on the cellulose fiber in an amount ranging from 1-25% by weight based on the weight of the cellulose fiber.

65. The method of Claim 55, wherein the binder is propylene glycol.

66. (Amended) The method of Claim 65, wherein the binder is present on the cellulose fiber in an amount from 1-40% by weight based on the weight of the cellulose fiber.

67. (Amended) The method of Claim 65, wherein the binder is present on the cellulose fiber in an amount ranging from 1-25% by weight based on the weight of the cellulose fiber.

68. The method of Claim 55, wherein the binding step is carried out at a temperature less than 150°C.

69. (Amended) The method of Claim 55, wherein the combining step comprises adding superabsorbent particles in an amount ranging from 1-80% by weight of the total weight of the superabsorbent particles and cellulose fiber.

70. (Amended) The method of Claim 55, wherein the combining step comprises adding superabsorbent particles in an amount ranging from 3-40% by weight of the total weight of the superabsorbent particles and cellulose fiber.

71. The method of Claim 55, wherein the binder is trimethylene glycol.

72. The method of Claim 55, wherein the binder is ethylene glycol.

73. The method of Claim 55, wherein the binder is dipropylene glycol.

D 1 18/ 74. The method of Claim 53, wherein the binder is butylene glycol.  
19/ 75. The method of Claim 53, wherein the binder is 2,3-butane diol.  
10/ 76. (New) The method of Claim 53, wherein the cellulose fiber comprises wood pulp fiber.  
D 2 16/ 77. (New) The method of Claim 72, wherein the cellulose fiber comprises wood pulp fiber.

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